

REMARKS

Claims 1-49 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner continues to rejection claims 1-4 under § 102(b) as indicated in the Advisory Action of August 25, 2006. Applicants traverse this rejection as follows.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, an elastic sheet having a top surface and a bottom surface, the top surface disposed on an inside surface of said cabinet including said opening; and a sliding key that is fixed on the top surface of said elastic sheet with at least a portion in said opening of said cabinet surface.

Applicants submit that because operating portion included in the input device of Fig. 27 of Kobachi is not fixed on the top surface of the elastic sheet, but in contrast, is merely connected to the edge portion of elastic structure 2.

Thus, Applicants submit that claim 1 is allowable for at least this reason. Additionally, Applicants submit that claims 2-4 are allowable, at least because of their dependency.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner continues to rejected claims 22, 24 and 27 as being unpatentable over Yasuda (US 5,012,230) in view of Kobachi as indicated in the Advisory Action of August 25, 2006. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons set forth below.

Even if combined as attempted by the Examiner, the proposed combination fails to teach or suggest, at least, “a sliding key that is fixed on the top surface of said elastic sheet,” as recited in independent claim 22. As conceded by the Examiner on page 5 of the Office Action, Yasuda

does not teach the sliding key to be fixed on the outside surface of an elastic sheet. Additionally, Yasuda specifically teaches that the movable member is not fixed to supporting plate 23 (col. 5, lines 16-18). Furthermore, as discussed above under the §102(b) rejection, Kobachi fails to teach or suggest a sliding key that is fixed on the top surface of an elastic sheet. The operating portion of Kobachi (portion engaged by finger) is merely connected by edge portion 30 to the edge of elastic structure 2. (See FIG. 27). Therefore, even if combined as attempted by the Examiner, the propose combination fails to teach or suggest “a sliding key fixed on the top surface” of a sheet.

Thus, Applicants submit that independent claim 22 is allowable, for at least this reason. Furthermore, claims 24 and 27 are allowable, at least because of their dependency.

Conclusion

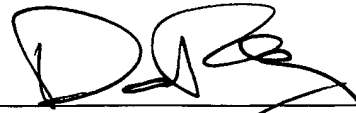
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. §1.114(c)
U.S. Appln. No. 10/623,568

Atty. Dkt No. Q7665

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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